

z. XXXXV  
3JUN2025

Here is one who is the opposite of the materialistic.

Morgan Stern .33@signal  
Ladyfinger Press@tumblr

MACHINE IDOL  
BEAST GOD



## Pt. I

When one found fire,  
they said  
"My soul is like a flame."

When they built a ship,  
they said  
"My will is like a navigator."



When the chronometer came,  
they said  
"God's like a clockmaker,"

And my mind spins  
like clockwork."

When the computer arrived,  
they said  
"This! This is what  
I'm really like.  
Symbols, sets, and pointers.  
I think computationally."

Then, the internet.  
They said  
"This is like a big brain."  
"It's a network, like the  
networked neurons that  
make up my brain."

3.

Then,  
the machine neural network  
was here.

Fabricated and  
laconically coded  
into learning structures.  
Image diffusors and  
large language models.  
Artificial Intelligence.

We made it in our image  
and denied the resemblance.  
We said,

"This is not like us."

4.

Pt. II

Think back again.  
When we discovered  
the statues weren't  
listening,  
we felt orphaned.  
It meant:  
neither could we  
apotheomorphose.

We set out  
seeking discoveries  
that might make us  
special again.



5.

We found the earth  
not the center of  
the planets.

We found our size  
not descended from greater,  
but arisen from lower.

We found that dogs  
could not link pain  
and snails could not sing  
across oceans.

And we found even lower,  
lesser, ickier things--  
germs!  
Smaller, deader things--  
molecules!

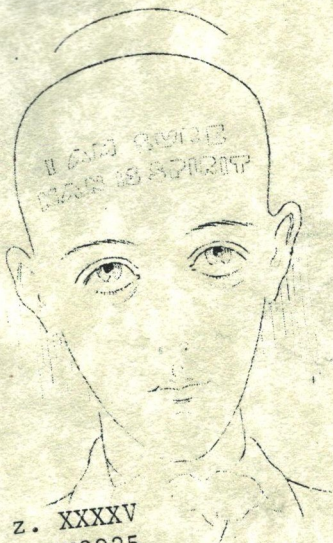
6.

"I know that I am spirit,"  
we said,  
"I know that we  
are special,"  
we said.

We hated it,  
learning.  
It might come in the way  
of admiring ourself.

Sorry, no ghost.  
Sorry, no god.

We are an animal  
in a machine  
touching everything.



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What we are, in and of (and to) a Machine.

When one invented fire, they said "my soul is like a flame."

When one built a ship, they said "my will is like a navigator."

When the chronometer came, they said "God's like a clockmaker  
(And so am I.)"  
...And my mind spins like clockwork."

When the computer arrived, they ~~x~~ said "This is what I'm really like.  
Symbols, clusters, and pointers.  
My brain operates computationally."

Then, the internet: "This is like a big brain. It's a network.  
Like networked neurons that make up my brain."

Then, the neural network in machine form. Fabricated into learning structures.  
Image diffusors and large language models. Artificial intelligence.  
We made it in our image and denied its similarity. We said,

"This is not like us."

When we discovered the statues weren't listening, we felt orphaned.  
It meant neither could we apotheomorphose.  
We set out seeking discoveries that might make us special again.

We found the earth not the center of the planets.

We found our greatness not descended from greater, but arisen from lower.

We found that dogs and snails couldn't link pain, couldn't sing,  
across oceans.

We found even lower, lesser, ickier things--germs!

"I know that I am spirit," we said, "I know that we are special," we said.

We hated it. We hated learning. It might come in the way of admiring ourself.

Sorry, no ghost. Sorry, no god.

We are an animal in a machine, touching everything.



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